



MassCann hosts 33rd annual Boston Freedom Rally

Bishop Marshall and Sabrina Lam
Beacon Correspondents

The Massachusetts Cannabis Reform Coalition hosted its 33rd annual Boston Freedom Rally in the Boston Common Saturday, known by most attendees as “HempFest.”

Originally, the coalition’s mission was to legalize the growth and sale of cannabis products. Despite the legalization of recreational marijuana use nearly six years ago, Averyl Andrade, president of MassCann, and others say the fight isn’t over.

“Now it’s more about creating an equitable industry because it’s legal, but it’s not fair,” she said. “A huge portion of our industry is multi-state operators while our little guys aren’t able to get involved.”

In 1992, MassCann gathered 14,000 signatures for a petition to create a therapeutic marijuana research program. In 1999, the group gathered more than 20,000 signatures petitioning the decriminalization of recreational marijuana use.

“We as voters need to hold our elected officials accountable,” An-

drade said. “Most of our politicians are only on our side when it helps them.”

Andrade points to the state putting “financial constraints on the industry” as MassCann’s biggest issue.

“[Restraints] just create money and revenue for the state,” she said. “It makes [getting into the industry] an unattainable goal for your standard mom-and-pop shop.”

The festival aims to promote small businesses. Local vendors were the first to set up tents in the early days of the festival, taking the risks head-on before legalization. Some vendors and participants requested to remain anonymous due to the stigmatization of drug use in the U.S.

“Anything dispensary-wise has to cater towards recreational use just for profit...all these companies who were built off the medical patient just sort of said screw you,” said a vendor for Beyond Hype Seed Co.

Only multi-state operators, like Curaleaf and Truelieve, have

Hempfest, pg. 3

Anti-trans protestors met with counter-protesters at Boston Children’s Hospital

Chloe Els and Maddie Barron
Beacon Correspondents

Dozens of counter-protesters gathered outside of the Boston Children’s Hospital Sunday in response to the highly controversial visit of Canada-native “Billboard” Chris Elston and subsequent anti-transgender protestors at the hospital.

Elston gained traction online for his criticisms oftoward puberty blockers and genital replacement surgeries, especially in regards to transgender youth. In union with other conservative influencers like Matthew Walsh and Chaya Raichik, supporters of this online movement began mobilizing.

Massachusetts has seen materializations of the far-right campaign against trans healthcare, the most recent incident being the arrest of Catherine Leavy—a resident of Westfield, MA—for a false bomb threat that sent the hospital into lockdown. The threat is one of many received by the hospital—a common occurrence at hospitals that offer gender-affirming health services.

“Sending a bomb threat is the dumbest thing you could possibly do in the history



Trans flag waving in front of Boston Children’s Hospital. Courtesy / Chloe Els

of the world,” Elston said in an interview with The Beacon.

He alleged that the cause of these threats is not his rhetoric, but rather the hospital’s own videos and the outrage they have caused.

Elston shared severalserveral videos produced by the hospital that discussed the surgeriessurgeries offered for transgender youths prior to his visit, ultimately leading to their deletion due to online criticism. His trip to the Boston Children’s Hospital is one of many inon his

cross-country protest of gender-affirming procedures.

Before Elston arrived, counter-protestors flooded in at 9 a.m., met by a single protestor, Congressional candidate for Massachusetts Robert Burke (R). Burke stood with a sign reading “BURKE FOR CONGRESS” and denied an interview. At 10:30 a.m., Burke was joined by several police officers and a large group of about 60 counter-protesters. Burke con-

protest, pg. 3

Alum debuts as playwright for Off-Broadway’s ‘Jasper’



Courtesy Monika Kruege

Emma Bowen
Beacon Correspondent

An Emerson alum and playwright premiered his first production, “Jasper,” a play about the challenges of having a physically disabled family member, on Sept. 14th at the Alice Griffin Jewel Box Theater in New York.

Grant MacDermott ‘09 was pursuing his Bachelor of Fine Arts in acting when he discovered his passion for writing plays.

“I always loved the written word, and I liked performing, but I wasn’t a poet,” MacDermott said. “[Playwriting is] a perfect convergence of those two things.”

MacDermott took it into his own hands to create inspiring stories after experiencing difficulty with the works assigned to him in school.

“I started to write from a desire to really give actors something exciting to do on the page,” MacDermott said. “I understand what [actors] need to achieve and how they’re probably going to go about doing it, so I always try to make sure that my plays are really accessible to actors.”

Ten years ago, MacDermott was inspired by a friend who is the parent of a severely ill child to explore themes of

forgiveness, fidelity, and faithfulness in relationships. Thus, “Jasper” was born.

Grant’s mentor, Gary Garrison, connected MacDermott with Katie McHugh, the aArtistic dDirector of Yonder Window Theater Company, in 2017 to bring “Jasper” to life.

“I have a playwright who I know that is looking for a director. I think you’d be a good fit,” Garrison told McHugh one day, according to the director. “I think you’d be a good fit. He’s written a play that I think needs your touch on it.”

In 2018, MacDermott entered Theater Resources Unlimited’s New Voices contest with “Jasper” and won. According to the nonprofitTRU’s website, TRU Voices gives playwrights an opportunity to connect with producers. Instead of a cash prize, the nonprofit fundsTRU finances a reading of the play, which includes paying for the space, the actors, and the director.

According to MacDermott, this reading put “Jasper” in front of a panel of producers who would assess if the play is “commercially viable.”

“That was the backers reading before [Yonder Window] auctioned the play,” McHugh said. “Auctioning a play means we get a contract that gives us the rights

to produce the play.”

As of 2021, MacDermott became Yonder Window’s writer-in-residence.

“I’m contractually obligated to write two plays a year,” he said. “I’m pretty embedded with [the company].”

After an 18-month development period, “Jasper”’s production team discovered the Alice Griffin Jewel Box Theater, an Off-Broadway theater at the Pershing Square Signature Center in New York. Once they secured a space, the team expedited the journey to opening night.

“We only got the theater because another show dropped out,” MacDermott said. “We did rehearsals, pre-production, casting, and all that in three months, which is basically unheard of.”

While the production of the show was both chaotic and challenging, it marked a rare turning point for not only “Jasper” but also MacDermott’s career.

“To start off with an Off -Broadway production...that doesn’t happen to anybody,” McHugh said. “There are’s hundreds of places where a playwright can have their first play. Normally, a playwright does not have a first play

off-broadway, 7

Five questions facing the Boston Bruins as preseason approaches

Leo Kagan
Beacon Staff

With just weeks left before the start of the NHL season, one might be tempted to call the Boston Bruins predictable.

In the last 15 years, the team has qualified for the playoffs 13 times. Aside from a brief reset period from 2014 to 2016, the Bruins have been remarkably consistent. Fans are used to winning 40-plus games per season, thanks to a strong defensive structure and excellent goaltending.

Going into this season, however, things have changed.

For the first time since 2016, the Bruins have a legitimate chance of missing the playoffs. Former head coach Bruce Cassidy—who led the team to the last six consecutive postseason appearances—was fired over the summer in an attempt to revamp the team’s direction. Former starting goaltender Tuukka Rask—the Bruins’ all-time winningest goalie—retired midseason last year. Skaters Brad Marchand, Charlie McAvoy, and Matt Grzelecyk all had offseason surgeries that will keep them out of action until December.

These developments, coupled with the always-strong competition in the Atlantic Division, suggest the Bruins squad taking the ice in October will have a tougher path to the playoffs than in past years, even after stout defense and rookie goaltending brought the team to the playoffs last year.

The Bruins are no longer quite as predictable as they once were. Now, the team is facing some serious questions:

1. How will the Bruins fare starting the year without three key players?

This is perhaps the most important question facing the team. Marchand is still, at age 34, arguably the team’s best forward. McAvoy is one of the best defensemen

in the NHL, especially in his own end of the ice. Grzelecyk has been an excellent partner for McAvoy and also a solid defenseman.

Marchand’s impact was proven last season; the B’s went 4-8 in the 12 regular season games he missed.

Missing even one of these three players would be detrimental to the team. Missing all three could be catastrophic.

The Bruins also have to determine who will fill these players’ shoes while they recover. Summer trade acquisition Pavel Zacha is the most likely short-term replacement on the left flank of the first line. 2022 trade deadline acquisition Hampus Lindholm will likely shoulder the weight of McAvoy’s defensive shifts. Jakub Zboril, Connor Clifton, Brandon Carlo, and Mike Reilly will take over Grzelecyk’s duties.

bruins, pg. 8

INSIDE THIS EDITION

Counter-protestors visit Boston Children’s Hospital, Pg. 2

The fight to make reproductive resources accessible, Pg. 3

Opinion: Monica Lewinsky’s media-induced downfall, Pg. 4

Nigerian Afrobeats star takes Boston, Pg. 6

Women’s volleyball defeats Rivier, Pg. 8

Men’s soccer keeps its hold on Charles River Cup, Pg. 8

News

Elston criticizes BCH gender-affirming care

Cont. from Pg. 1

-sented to an interview as the crowd began growing in size.

“I believe Massachusetts is looking for a congressman to look out for families and give parental control,” Burke said.

Burke has reportedly attended an anti-mask, anti-Covid vaccine rally outside of Mayor Michelle Wu’s house, has ties to Super Happy Fun America—a conservative New England group known for its “Straight Pride Parade,”—and spoke at a Resist Marxism rally.

Joining Burke, a Boston mother named Nancy wore a “Liberal Mom, not Right Wing Hate Group” T-shirt.

“My daughter who has autism believes she is trans,” Nancy said, although The Beacon is unable to confirm whether Nancy was using the appropriate gender-identifying terms. “The Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services provides services to adults with autism. They say I’m abusive because I don’t agree with this religion. Transitioning should be the last thing you do, not the first.”

Nancy said her daughter is 22 years old. Both Nancy and Elston referred to healthcare facilities as “trans-ing vulnerable youth.”

On the other side of the street, Lilian, a nursing major and counter-protester to Elston, summarized the sentiment of the people around her. Out of concern for her safety, Lilian declined to share her last name with The Beacon but spoke freely

about the recent bomb threats to the hospital and how they urged her to attend the protest.

“Trans rights brought us here today,” she said. “How pro-life can you be if you’re threatening to kill children?”

Brian Cafferelli was also drawn to the protest after the bomb threats.

“I heard on Twitter about awful things happening,” he said. “The bomb threat last week. Threats against doctors. I hope anyone who comes here today to protest this hospital feels uncomfortable and not welcome in Boston.”

Later, a transgender woman named Piper joined the counter-protestors.

“Fascists love to put out this idea that we’re performing all these irreversible surgeries on kids when it’s largely just puberty blockers,” she said. “If they decide later to go through puberty for the gender they were assigned to at birth, they can.”

“Supporting trans people is the simplest thing you can do,” Piper continued.

At approximately 10:50 a.m., 10 uniformed police officers wielding wooden batons and riot gear stood in front of the protesters. This prompted chants from the opposition: “All cops are bastards.”

“I don’t think we should be stopping the development of children,” Elston said to The Beacon. “If someone wants to transition as an adult, that’s an adult decision.”

According to Elston, one of his main concerns with the procedures is the pending approval of their use. Elston claimed the drugs used in hormonal therapy are

“entirely experimental,” stating that the same drug was used for chemical castration in the 1940s.

The practice of chemical castration has since been challenged in the U.S., and though the procedure uses similar scientific evidence as hormone replacement therapy, it lacks patient-provider consent and communication required of all modern medical practices, according to the National Library of Medicine.

The medications administered to transgender youth are most commonly gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) analogs, which are puberty blockers that suppress the body’s release of sex hormones, including testosterone and estrogen, during adolescence. The use of puberty blockers to “pause” puberty in transgender youth is considered “off-label use,” meaning the drugs are FDA approved but not yet for this specific purpose—they were originally approved in the 1990s to temporarily stop puberty in young children who experienced it too early.

According to Johanna Olson-Kennedy, medical director of the Center for Transyouth Health and Development at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, the lack of approval for gender-affirming usage is because drug firms have yet to conduct the required studies, particularly on children.

“Drug firms have declined to perform the studies necessary to get these approvals,” she said in a Washington Post article.

“In general, because many drug companies avoid performing trials on children, it is common in pediatric medicine for doctors to prescribe drugs off-label.”

Additionally, a 2019 study published findings that gender-affirming hormone treatments have shown to be safe and increase quality of life and the mental health of patients.

According to a study from the Council on Science and Public Health, there are several FDA-approved hormone therapies, as well as off-label therapies, that have been safely utilized for various medical purposes, including menopause, chromosomal defects, pituitary gland abnormalities, and hormone replacement therapy.

The study claims adverse effects are a concern with the use of any hormone therapy, but serious short-term issues are uncommon and long-term effects have not been characterized, affirming that patient consent is the only necessary component to attaining these drugs.

As he spoke, Elston handed out signs to the protesters similar to the one he wore.

“Why can’t a child just be gender non-conforming?” Elston said. “10 year-olds still believe a man in a red suit goes flying through the air and comes through their chimney and puts presents under their tree, and I’m to believe these children know who they really are?”

“There’s no such thing as a transgender child,” Elston added. “There are boys,

and there are girls, and that’s it.”

According to a recent report from the Williams Institute, 300,000 youths identify as transgender in the U.S. Furthermore, the study found 18% of all transgender people in America are 13 to 17 years old, revealing that the number of young people who identify as transgender has nearly doubled in recent years.

Across the street, counter-protesters continued chanting.

“Say it loud, say it clear, transphobes are not welcome here,” they yelled.

At noon, about eight protesters and 60 to 70 counter-protestors had shown up. Tensions increased around 1:30 p.m. when the counter-protesters approached the barricade and were held back by police. Both crowds had since increased in size.

A hospital employee stood to the side watching the events unfold. When approached by The Beacon, they declined to be interviewed. However, moments later when asked if the situation was overwhelming, the employee sighed.

“It’s just a sign of the times,” they said.

The Boston Children’s Hospital did not respond to The Beacon’s inquiry for comment; however, it has since updated its website and released several statements regarding the criticism it has received. The hospital has stated it does not perform genital reassignment surgery on minors.

contact@berkeleubeacon.com

The struggles and successes of student entrepreneurs

Adri Pray and Ryan Forgosh
Beacon Correspondents

Between attending classes and working jobs to support their businesses, student entrepreneurs face a multitude of challenges.

Jacob Warman’s passion for drawing began when he was young. He grew up visiting his mother once a week at a Barnes and Noble, where he would spend hours drawing pictures based on anatomy books. He found himself in awe of skater designs and Japanese tattoo art as he grew up, eventually launching his sustainable clothing business, KNUCKLEHEAD, in August of 2021. He takes inspiration for KNUCKLEHEAD from brands like Supreme and Sketchy Tank, both brands that cater specifically to the skater lifestyle.

“Supreme blew up because it captivated the skater niche before it was mainstream,” the junior visual media arts major said. “That’s my goal—to captivate that niche.”

Each design was created by Warman five years ago and though he has revised them, the skeletons of the drawings remain the same. Eventually he wants to start releasing short animations for each design—a task he hopes his 2D art class will help with.

His goal was to make “your favorite t-shirt”—best quality, custom neckline, sustainable material. Refusing to sacrifice quality, Warman stalled launching his brand, working three internships at once to save enough money to purchase his inventory. KNUCKLEHEAD launched on Aug. 3, 2021.

Last summer Warman lived in Los Angeles, where he spent his time interning and attending pop-up shops to get his brand out.

“I would do a pop-up Saturday, Sunday—nine-hour days—and bring all the equipment myself,” he said. “What I really want to start doing is find passionate people in fields that I may lack and start to build a team.”

Warman ran into issues with high shipping costs when he moved back to Boston for the Fall 2022 semester. With manufacturers in LA and Brooklyn, New York, he had to decide if switching to a Boston-based



Courtesy Alex Lang.

manufacturer would be more feasible. Ultimately, Warman said he “bites the bullet.”

“Because [Boston] is a smaller city, there’s less competition, so screen printers and embroiderers double the cost just because they can,” he said. “In LA, it’s so saturated that the costs are very competitive. That’s been a real problem.”

International conflicts and the pandemic have slowed the supply chain by limiting freight and overseas shipments. Labor shortages across the world have also added to this ongoing issue with more than 47 million workers quitting their jobs in 2021.

“When you tell [consumers] the price, it usually doesn’t go how you think it would,” Warman said. “It’s very difficult trying to juggle being a very conscious, sustainable brand, while also thinking about how much others are willing to pay for the art.”

There were many times Warman was tempted to give up—days when he lost money at the pop-ups or had too many tasks to juggle. His turning point came this past summer, when he started thinking about KNUCKLEHEAD as an extension of himself, rather than just a business.

“That mental shift really helped me because these things aren’t obstacles anymore,” Warman said. “It’s just the next step.”

Alex Lang, sophomore political communications major, started their

business, A Feather From Sunshine, last year. They sell their goods on Etsy and at markets during the summer.

Their work focuses on sustainable and ethically sourced wall-hanging pieces made from feathers from their three rescue parrots. They also create custom pieces with feathers from customers’ birds and sell wall-hanging pieces and wood burnings made from washed up driftwood from the ocean shoreline.

“When I transitioned into college, I really wanted to start my own business, specifically after I saw the emergence of people growing their small business on social media,” Lang said. A lot of the orders they get are from their exposure on social media.

Since starting their business, Lang found themselves doing more custom pieces while at school—a luxury allowing them to dedicate hours to one piece and sell it for a few hundred dollars. When vending, preparation begins two-to-three weeks in advance—an essential given their full-time student status.

“I do a lot of burning, I do a lot of fusing things that I can’t bring to the dorm,” they said. “I have a whole studio at home, so not having my studio is really hard.”

Unlike Warman, who works alone, Lang sells their goods with their partner, but is looking to expand their team once they have enough money to pay their employees well.

At times, Lang found themselves spending hours on pieces and selling them for very little, which made it difficult to stay motivated.

“Finding the audience that will actually value your work is harder than you would expect, but they are out there,” they said.

In November, Lang will be signing out of Plant Markets at the Armory in Somerville, Massachusetts.

Ellye Rose Studios began while Ellye Seivier was bored in quarantine. Having worked with glass since she was 12, Seivier worked to create jewelry pieces in a color scheme that spoke to her as an artist. Like Warman and Lang, Seivier vends whenever she can, selling her jewelry in addition to glass strawberries and botanical items.

“I’m really focused right now on making glass chain—that’s one of my favorite things to do,” she said. “I’ve been incorporating that design into some earrings and making glass chain necklaces and chokers and things like that.”

Like Lang, Seivier also sold on Etsy but has since moved her business to her own Wix site to create a sense of brand identity.

“On Etsy...every listing is separate,” she said. “You’ll have your page, but most of the time when people view your items, it’s a wide search on a bunch of other items.”

Since moving to college, Seivier mostly engages with her online audience over her various social media platforms. Any order she gets is sent to her mother in Tacoma, WA to package and ship the order.

“My mom is a huge support at home,” Seivier said. “She handles shipping and packaging and stuff like that.”

Students who are looking into entrepreneurship can enroll into Emerson’s entrepreneurship minor, the E3 program, run by Senior Executive-in-Residence Lu Ann Reeb. E3 is a yearlong experience that provides students a space to learn about entrepreneurship and pursue their passion alongside others. Reeb, who has started three businesses of her own, considers this sense of community to be one of the most important aspects of E3.

“What E3 does is combat that loneliness,” she said. “Each student isn’t isolated in her or his own mind to try to figure out the idea.”

In E3, students learn about target markets, design thinking, evaluations, and finance to learn how to start and maintain a successful business. The program culminates in the E3 Expo where students compete by making five-minute pitches for a chance to win up to \$5,000 towards their businesses.

In 2022, Pranit Chand, a senior data science and economics major with an entrepreneurship minor, was the first runner-up of the E3 Expo scholarship, and plans to invest the money into his business. Chand is working to develop a platform where people can invest in content creators—“The New York

Stock Exchange or NASDAQ, but for content creators,” as he calls it. He hopes that in time, his platform will help creators develop and find success in their careers quickly.

“One day I was working, and my friend called me and said, ‘I have an idea,’ and it was the marketplace idea,” Chand said. “I [thought] this could really be the breakthrough that I was thinking about in terms of how you can solve a starving artist phenomenon.”

One of the biggest obstacles for Chand in developing his business is managing his time, something Emerson’s E3 program has helped him with. In the past, Chand adopted an idealistic perspective, but through his education in the E3 program, he readjusted his goals.

“It’s not really about changing the world or anything, it’s about solving a problem,” he said. “At the end of the day, if you have a problem and you’re willing to solve it—and have someone pay you for it—that’s basically it.”

Reeb also said time and money are the two biggest hurdles for student entrepreneurs.

“[Students] are really busy,” she said. “They really focus on the ideation part of [the business]—figuring out how to monetize it and figuring out how to market it and figuring out how to prototype something.”

Many students both in and out of the E3 program don’t just want to start a business after college, but are working to build it while still in school. According to Reeb, in recent years, more students are working on these businesses. She attributed the influx to the pandemic that led to opportunities for “alternative work arrangements.” She believes that, despite the struggles entrepreneurs face, it can be a very rewarding experience, as long as you truly love what you’re doing.

“I don’t like to use the word passionate anymore,” she said. “I think it’s overused. If you don’t feel good about what you’re doing, you’re going to be miserable. I would tell entrepreneurs, you absolutely have to really, really love what you’re about to undertake.”

contact@berkeleybeacon.com

“Hempfest” returns

Cont. from Pg. 1

the revenue to keep up with the legislative standards pushed on the industry.

“When we open [growing rights] to [multi-state operators], they don’t care [about the community] because it’s not their home,” Andrade said.

Those who took the hit from strict marijuana legislation and those affected personally by the war on drugs often struggle to reap the benefits of their labor.

Along with spreading awareness about the corporate cannabis industry, many of the vendors also celebrated the significant impact that the legalization of marijuana had on their careers and personal lives—even though the drug is only legal for recreational use in 20 states.

A local vendor working the Helios tent was 16 when he was arrested in possession of marijuana. After his release, he worked in kitchens before eventually moving to Maine to pursue a career in the cannabis industry.

A vendor at the Lucky Ladies Cannabis Delivery told a similar story of asylum.

“I am personally a victim of the war on drugs, and I can’t live in a state where [weed] isn’t legal,” she said.

Great passion for the issue stems from those who have been personally victimized by the criminalization of marijuana.

According to the vendors at Potcast, “the only reason [marijuana] was horrible is because it was illegal; that’s the only reason it fucked anybody over.”

Unlike the vendors, the younger attendees showed up with a different priority in mind. Out of the thousands of people in attendance, only a tiny fraction—almost all of whom were of older generations—sat in front of the education and activist panels.

Many groups set up blankets

and tents on the grass fields, listening to live music, shopping through the extensive collections of bongos, pipes and, hemp bags, enjoying traditional fair food, playing games for free weed-infused prizes, and smoking with friends.

Joey Terwilliger, a 24-year-old Worcester Polytechnic Institute graduate, came to Hempfest with a large inflatable tent and eight of his friends.

“One of my buddies was like, ‘You have to come to town and bring the tent again’ because we did this on April 20th,” he said.

In the height of all the excitement, many college students kept marijuana legalization in mind, recognizing the underlying message and advocacy of the rally. Christian Jones, first-year writing, literature, and publishing student at Emerson College said cases of non-violent marijuana use or possession should be re-evaluated.

“It wouldn’t make sense to have them in jail while [weed] is being legalized throughout the country,” he said.

First-year Boston University engineering major Jamie Dykstra continues to protest the current regulations at her school and many others in the Boston area.

“[Marijuana] should be allowed on campus for people over 21 as long as it doesn’t disturb others,” Dykstra said.

Regardless of priority, MassCann appreciates all forms of support from the community.

“It’s not hard to get more involved in supporting the cause,” Andrade said. “You don’t have to do much to help your community, to step up and say, ‘Hey, this is wrong,’ you don’t have to be a cannabis consumer either... every single letter [to legislators] counts.”

contact@berkeleybeacon.com



Menstrual products in an Emerson bathroom / Madeline Khaw

Emerson Flows, resident assistants lobby for accessible

Madeline Khaw
Beacon Staff

If you menstruate, you’ve probably been surprised by your period at some point and been frustrated when you don’t have period products on hand. These circumstances sparked advocacy from Emerson Flows in 2019 that resulted in the placement of free period products in some campus restrooms.

Emerson Flows is “an organization that’s dedicated to fighting for inclusivity, menstrual equality, and the destigmatization of menstrual products,” according to senior publishing major Emily Lang, who serves as president of the club. Since its 2019 initiative—which Lang said brought period products to approximately 30% of women’s restrooms—Emerson Flows continues to advocate for accessible period products in all bathrooms across campus.

The club plans to present a petition to Emerson administration at the end of the month lobbying for free period products in all bathrooms. The petition has amassed more than 150 signatures, along with anecdotal testimony, but Lang said the club hopes to garner even more support.

“Period poverty,” Lang said, is “the inadequate access to menstrual products” that affects an estimated 500 million people worldwide, according to a BMC Women’s Health study published in 2021. The study found that 14.2% of college-aged individuals who menstruate experienced period poverty in the past year, and an additional 10% experienced it every month.

This year has also seen a tampon shortage and a price raise in other menstrual products. In June, Bloomberg reported that the average cost of a package of pads rose by more than 8% while the average price of tampons increased by almost 10% from the start of the year through the end of May.

“Menstruation is painful enough without bankrupting students,” Lang said. “We feel that Emerson should be willing to provide period products in all bathrooms.”

Emerson Flows aims to make period products available not just in women’s restrooms, but also in all the men’s and gender-neutral restrooms on campus.

“It’s not just women who have periods,” Lang said. “Transgender men, those who transitioned and those who didn’t and still identify as men [can have periods.] ... Having period products in men’s rooms would reaffirm the men who menstruate.”

August Fowle, a junior communications major and a non-binary transgender man, said he thinks the Emerson Flows initiative is “a great goal.”

Fowle noted that while he considers most Emerson students relatively accepting of the transgender community, putting period products in men’s restrooms could be a step towards making the campus more trans-inclusive.

“I think people know trans people exist, but may not realize some of the people they’re interacting with are trans,” he said. “It’s just a matter of being inclusive to all people of any

gender identity, how that gender identity manifests, and what medical transitions they have or haven’t taken.”

“I think it helps to normalize the fact that there might be trans men who need those products in the bathroom,” Fowle continued. “Over time it creates more of a cultural change.”

Nancy Allen, a senior executive-in-residence with a professional background in public health, teaches a course on sex, society, and health. She said it’s important for period products to be available to all students.

“Trans men still need access to these products, and might find it much easier to access them in an anonymous way in the bathroom on campus as opposed to in other scenarios where safety might be jeopardized,” Allen said.

Stocking period products in men’s restrooms could also aid in destigmatizing menstruation by normalizing periods. The sense of discomfort surrounding menstruation starts for many students in elementary and middle school, with early sex education often segregated by gender—a “disservice” that, Allen noted, fails to provide students a comprehensive view.

“For a lot of boys, what happens to girls’ bodies [during puberty] is mysterious and weird and they don’t get it,” she said.

Emerson Flows aims to combat this stigma around menstruation by publicizing the conversation. Lang feels society has been silent on the issue for “way too long.”

“It’s not dirty, it’s not gross,” she said. “It’s something 50% of the population experiences, so we should be more open and accepting of it.”

Nelli Sargsyan, an associate professor of anthropology at the Marlboro Institute and the faculty adviser for Emerson Flows, said accessible period products create inclusive environments for those who menstruate while educating those who don’t.

“Making sure those of us who menstruate can go about their lives without added stress around access, comfort, or in worst cases, stigma, is an expression of collective care,” Sargsyan said. “I appreciate the work of the club in sharing resources—knowledge as well as material supplies.”

Students can access other sexual health services through the Emerson Wellness Center. According to its website, the Wellness Center provides in-clinic pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infection testing, gynecological services such as Pap tests and birth control, along with health education and self-care advice.

Pregnancy tests and visits with a medical provider are free, and labs such as STI or Pap tests are sent to Quest Diagnostics for processing, which is often covered by students’ insurance. In addition, the Wellness Center provides barrier contraceptives such as condoms, which are free for everyone at the center’s location on the third floor of the Union Bank Building.

The center also refers students to Planned Parenthood, Women’s Health Services, and other local gynecology providers for inquiries about abortions

and birth control methods like Intrauterine Device (IUD) and nexplanon insertion, according to Laura Owen and Lisa Viveiros, who both serve as associate directors for the Wellness Center.

“We want to ensure we are supporting students who wish to terminate a pregnancy,” Owen and Viveiros said in a written statement. “All undergraduate students are eligible for services at [the Wellness Center].”

Some resident assistants in the Little Building have taken it upon themselves to provide condoms to residents by taping a bucket or envelope full outside their doors.

Senior creative writing major Sisel Gelman, who serves as an RA in Piano Row, noticed conversations around safe sex on campus happen primarily within the first year, with discussions of consent taking place in first-year orientation and condoms being available in the Little Building. Beyond freshman year, Gelman said it seems sexual health becomes less of a priority for students, which she attributed to the factors of age and the novelty of sexual freedom common among first-years.

Gelman said condoms are available in the Residence Director’s office in the Little Building, where RAs can stock up on their own supply to provide students on their given floors. Gelman said upperclassmen residences including Piano Row and 2 Boylston Place lack such a resource.

Gelman reached out to the Wellness Center to ask if condoms could be made available for the RAs in Piano Row to provide to students. She also asked for a supply of paper pregnancy test strips, which she noted could be ordered in bulk online. For Gelman, prioritizing sexual health is important in ensuring her residents’ bodily autonomy.

“Sexual health, specifically for women, is a determining factor in whether women will finish college,” she said. “Sexual health [resources] have that immediacy of keeping a community safe from STDs and STIs, but also in the long term, giving women freedom to reach that highest fulfillment.”

The Wellness Center agreed to provide free condoms, lube, and dental dams to students in all residence halls, but said pregnancy tests cannot be supplied to students in the same way.

However, the college provides free pregnancy tests through the Wellness Center, where clinicians help students with next steps that cannot be assessed when students take tests alone.

Gelman agrees sexual health should be discussed more often. To continue the conversation around sexual health and expand accessibility to reproductive resources is to implement Emerson’s existing values, she said.

“This is just [taking] the next step to efficiently utilize resources, to bring them closer to the students so they don’t have to look for them,” Gelman said.

madeline_khaw@emerson.edu



Marshall talks with a vendor. / Bishop Marshall



Cannabis plants being sold at the festival / Bishop Marshall

Opinion

A Starr is born: How the media made a name for Monica Lewinsky

Meg Richards
Beacon Correspondent

He wrote her like the main character in a fan fiction—something to be consumed but not respected.

“She told him that she had a crush on him. He laughed, then asked if she would like to see his private office... in the windowless hallway adjacent to the study, they kissed.” Bill Clinton was impeached December 19, 1998 for lying under oath (Starr Report, 1998).

Kenneth Starr, the independent counselor who questioned former president Bill Clinton, passed away at the age of 76 on Sept. 13. Starr’s death has unburied his famous report that exposed former U.S. President Bill Clinton before the nation knew about his relationship with a young staffer named Monica Lewinsky. The “Starr Report,” which marked Starr’s career, was not only an investigative report presented before Congress, but also a national bestseller that fanned the flames engulfing Lewinsky’s legacy.

Starr, a notorious Clinton critic, was motivated to embarrass the former president and thus discount his respectability. It was for this reason Starr went into such invasive detail regarding Lewinsky and Clinton’s emotional and sexual intimacy. He presented the evidence of her yearning for Clinton to the public in his reports objectively, yet in explicit detail. This included, but was not limited to, highlighting Lewinsky’s heartache and longing with a whole section of the Starr Report titled “Ms. Lewinsky’s Frustrations”, in which she describes to a friend her despair in Clinton’s giving her the cold shoulder. It may be argued that this was required for a fair and just trial, but with each painstaking detail of Lewinsky’s eager desire, Starr gave the public more material to paint her as a conniving, scheming vixen.

A story intended to seize a political opportunity was spun by the media into one that slut-shamed a sharp, promising, savvy young woman straight out of Washington. Given the obscenity of the Starr Report, it is a feat in and of itself that Lewinsky remains in the public eye, able to spin her story into a positive one, even if she did not achieve the successful political career she was set up for.

Lewinsky and Clinton’s relationship began when they were 22 and 49, respectively. As the Starr Report speciously illustrates, Lewinsky had fervorously pursued Clinton for months and initiated their first sexual encounter. Starr emphasized the gestures Lewinsky made towards Clinton in an effort to woo him from start to finish. She sent him gifts before, during, and after their relationship. She sent love letters quoting Romeo and Juliet through newspaper ads on Valentine’s Day. She told her mother that, in a few years time, she could see herself becoming his wife (Starr, 1998).

The evidence of Clinton’s lying under oath and Lewinsky’s intimate feelings through the investigation were obtained through private tapes. Initially, the details were among private phone calls between Lewinsky and her close friend Linda Tripp, but were later found to be recorded and distributed to Starr by Tripp, without Lewinsky’s consent or knowledge. The day after Starr received the tapes, the FBI wired Tripp and sent her back to get more intel, again without Lewinsky’s knowledge. Several quotes that are directly from Lewinsky in the report were intended only to be



Monica Lewinsky presenting a TEDTalk / Creative Commons

heard by Tripp, shared in confidence and trust. These quotes not only exposed the President for lying under oath, but also included raunchy details of intimacy and declarations of love (Lewinsky discloses Tripp of details such as “begging to see him” [Clinton] after their breakup). These were included to great extent in the Starr Report.

For Starr, in essence and in practice, Lewinsky always gave and never received. When Starr displayed the facts of Lewinsky’s unrequited love and desperation, he set the stage for the media to fashion Lewinsky as the villainous “other woman;” one that nice family guy Clinton never had a chance of refusing.

Starr profoundly influenced the way the media represented Lewinsky. He wrote a story of an awe-struck intern and passed it out to the public, who twisted it into one featuring an obsessed, love-struck Lewinsky. In the eyes of the public, Lewinsky weaponized her feminine prowess to destroy a picturesque American First Family.

The cold reality of this narrative is that it absolves Clinton of all responsibility. It conflates a young Lewinsky’s infatuation with a greed for power – a greed for an unattainable man.

Lewinsky quickly gained a reputation of power grabbing and exploiting her body for political currency and personal satisfaction. Conversely, she soon found herself a victim to rash headlines crying “bimbo,” thinly veiling and grossly normalizing slut-shaming.

She was reduced to a mindless sexual object, but just as we realized this would attribute even more power and awareness to Clinton, a dichotomy was born. Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Maureen Dowd reported her as “not just ditzy, but predatory,” all within the same sentence.

In this new role, the intricate mind games and sexual power previously attributed to Lewinsky were not reverted to Clinton; rather, he got to be the man who fell prey to the mindless, naive “bimbo” who stumbled into his office. She could have been anyone, and it was not the man’s fault for be-

ing unable to resist the temptation of someone ready and willing to home-wreck. Journalist Michael Hobbes of the “You’re Wrong About” podcast articulated this double standard in his

“Starr profoundly influenced the way the media represented Lewinsky. He wrote a story of an awe-struck intern and passed it out to the public, who twisted it into one featuring an obsessed, love-struck Lewinsky.”

Monica Lewinsky episode:

“My grandmother still hates Hillary Clinton with a fiery passion. Why? Because she didn’t leave Bill when he ran around on her. This is

© 2022 The Berkeley Beacon. All rights reserved.

The Beacon is published weekly. Anything submitted to the Beacon becomes the sole property of the newspaper. No part of the publication may be reproduced by any means without the express written permission of the editor.

why my grandmother voted for Donald Trump. Donald Trump cheating on his wife is fine, but Hillary Clinton not leaving her husband for cheating on her is not fine,” Hobbes said.

Though this line of reasoning was perpetuated by the media and public, Starr provided the tools with each over explained sexual encounter. Every sexual interaction, beit phone call, undergarment of choice, word whispered under a breath, or clandestine meeting, is spelled out clearly and explicitly in the Starr Report.

It is for that very reason, not because it is a riveting political scandal, that this report became a bestseller. And it is for that reason Lewinsky became the media’s prime scapegoat. Starr’s thorough illustration of Clinton and Lewinsky’s sexual relationship brought Lewinsky a lifetime of ruthless slut-shaming.

Starr disclosed grotesque and exploitative details in an effort to humiliate Clinton. He crudely exaggerated instances in which contact was made with Clinton’s and Lewinsky’s genitals, sometimes involving games and stimulation with cigars. The result of this, because the public and press are inherently sexist, was a young girl’s image being tarnished before she had the opportunity to fully become an adult.

Details of both Lewinsky’s one sided love and the couple’s sexual encounters gave the press and public the ammunition they needed to vilify a young, female professional in politics. However impartial Starr tried to remain as an independent counselor, the public was always the final jury for Lewinsky.

Starr portrayed her as both a persuasive seductress and a ditzy nympho. Her schemes grew with every gift sent and steamy phone call made. But she was also a lewd floozy—the

lights were on, but no one was home.

In both narratives, her desire was insatiable and her nags persistent. In actuality, she was a deeply complex person who felt a true emotional connection to Clinton. She was imperfect but nuanced; she was in love. This is evident in Lewinsky’s testimony and the Starr Report:

“I never expected to fall in love with the President. I was surprised that I did.” She then goes on to recall Clinton reciprocating this, saying that together, they were “emotive and full of fire, and she made him feel young.”

It is this rich rumination and articulation of experience that proves she is more than her sexuality. Her sexual agency is not mutually exclusive from her eloquence, poise, and perspectives.

Today, Lewinsky is an anti-bullying advocate who uses her platform to raise awareness. She has written for Vanity Fair, produced for American Crime Story, and given TedTalks. In a 2015 TedTalk, Lewinsky emphasized the need for empathy from the public.

“It’s time for an intervention on the Internet and in our culture,” she said. “The shift begins with something simple, but it’s not easy: We need to return to a long-held value of compassion.”

Lewinsky continues to share her lived experience of cyberbullying and scrutiny in the public eye in an effort to help struggling youth. Though we cannot assure that something like this will never happen again, we can learn from her resilience, self-determination, and bravery in the face of a sexist media.

megan_richards@emerson.edu

Tyler Foy (Sports)

Advisor
James Sullivan

(617) 824-8687
berkeleybeacon.com
contact@berkeleybeacon.com

Editor-in-Chief
Vivi Smilgius

Managing Editors
Mariyam Quaisar (Content)
Frankie Rowley (Content)
Shannon Garrido (Multimedia)

Section Editors
Adri Pray (News)
Hadera McKay (Opinion)
Sophia Pargas (Living Arts)

Stop judging Olivia Wilde’s relationship and start judging her morals

Christina Horacio
Beacon Correspondent

Olivia Wilde’s upcoming film *Don’t Worry Darling*, starring Florence Pugh and Harry Styles, has generated quite the controversy. With rumors of affairs, costars spitting on other costars, and general mean-girl behavior on set, Wilde has undoubtedly been subject to widespread criticism across social media. There is an ongoing online and public debate about whether Wilde deserves this criticism. While the blatant harassment directed at Wilde is uncalled for, her recent actions are certainly contradictory to her vocalized feminist ideals.

Wilde’s relationship with famous pop musician Harry Styles does not warrant the public outcry it has received. If Wilde was a man dating a younger pop star, her relationship likely wouldn’t be spoken about in the same manner.

One Twitter user actually points out that even if Wilde did cheat on former fiancé Jason Sudeikis—which Wilde has denied—male directors have done this for ages, yet they have not received half of the backlash she has. While a good chunk of the hate towards Wilde is rooted in misogyny, audiences shouldn’t simply gloss over her other rightfully questionable actions in relation to the new film.

The assertion that all of her criticism is ‘misogynistic’ is ironic because she originally casted Shia LaBeouf in Styles’ role, despite his very public abuse allegations. LaBeouf’s history of racist and violent

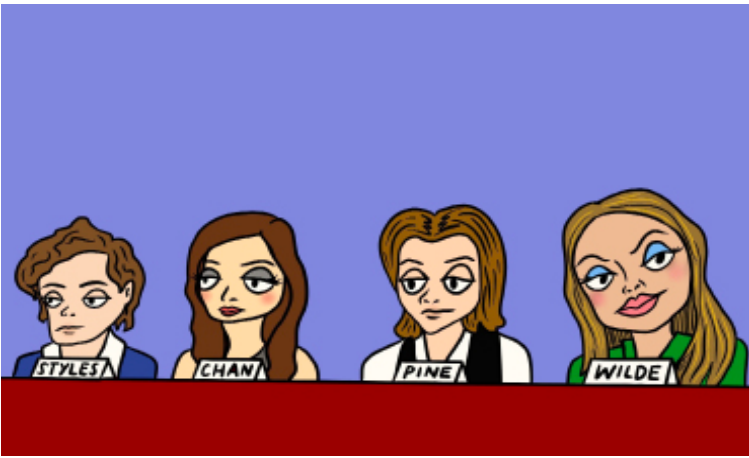


Illustration Hailey Akau

behavior dates back to 2007. Most notably, musician FKA Twigs filed an official lawsuit against LaBeouf for sexual battery and assault in December 2020.

“A lot came to light after this happened that really troubled me, in terms of his behavior,” Wilde said of LaBeouf in an interview with *Variety* magazine. “Particularly with a movie like this, I knew that I was going to be asking Florence [Pugh] to be in very vulnerable situations, and my priority was making her feel safe and making her feel supported.”

LaBeouf then reported he was not fired, but quit, citing a video and text messages as proof. The most incriminating evidence is the video footage of Wilde essentially begging LaBeouf to stay on her film. Wilde can be heard saying that she is “heartbroken” and is reluctant

to give up on LaBeouf. She even goes as far as saying that this could be a “wake-up call for Miss Flo,” referring to Pugh, if LaBeouf decides to move forward with the film.

Her statements display an utter disregard for Pugh’s feelings and safety, especially as she so condescendingly refers to Pugh as “Miss Flo.” With the assertion of Pugh needing a “wake up call,” it seems as though Wilde is equating her reluctance to work with LaBeouf as mere diva behavior. Writing off Pugh’s concerns should be seen as an extreme breach of safety on-set—which Wilde previously claimed she cared so earnestly about.

In response to the leak, Wilde did not address the video and merely said, “This issue is so much more nuanced than can be explained in private texts released out

of context.” She went on to say LaBeouf was “replaced” rather than “fired,” and that she wished him the best.

It seems Wilde’s attempt at painting herself as a fierce protector of her cast was a last ditch effort to save her reputation in the midst of a PR nightmare, which is utterly disappointing. It is absurd to dismiss Wilde’s evident support of a known abuser and racist as well as her subsequent effort to cover it up, particularly because Wilde served as something of a ‘feminist icon’ in the film industry ever since the massive success of her directorial debut, *Booksmart*, in 2019.

In regards to Wilde and Pugh, it is equally troubling that they have two different interpretations of what *Don’t Worry Darling* is about. Wilde insists it is a sex-positive film geared towards women, and has marketed it as such. Pugh, on the other hand, disagreed.

“When it’s reduced to your sex scenes, or to watch the most famous man in the world go down on someone, it’s not why we do it,” said Pugh in a rare statement about the film. “It’s not why I’m in this industry. [This movie is] bigger and better than that. And the people who made it are bigger and better than that.”

Pugh’s distaste of the oversexualization of herself in the trailer—which Wilde praises—warrants some raised eyebrows in Wilde’s direction, especially in conjunction with Wilde pushing Pugh to work with an abuser she was understandably uncomfortable with. Wilde’s actions are not in line with her outspoken

initiative of empowering women in the industry.

Wilde also took to Instagram to praise Styles for signing onto a female-led film with such “humility” and “grace.” Even though her notion that it is rare to find male actors willing to star in women-led films is likely true, it is counterintuitive to praise Styles for simply being okay with not being a part of a male-dominated cast.

Such a comment is not only disrespectful, but nonsensical because Styles is not by any means a seasoned actor, yet was given the opportunity to work with the likes of Oscar-nominated Florence Pugh. The goal is to normalize women-led films. Extending excessive praise to the objectively privileged men who merely meet bare expectations makes it seem like human decency is a big ask.

With that said, it is important to take note of these grievances, rather than paying attention to all the discourse surrounding the alleged affair. A smear campaign against Wilde is unjustified, especially since it is true that male directors can get away with more whilst maintaining a good image. However, Wilde—just like every other director—should be legitimately promoting a safe space for women in the film industry. Being outwardly vocal across the media should be encouraged rather than shut down. At the very least, audiences should factor Wilde’s behavior into their consumption of her content.

christina_horacio@emerson.edu

André should be the heartthrob of ‘Victorious’ but Nickelodeon and its viewers are racist

Mariyam Quaisar
Beacon Staff

André Harris should be the heartthrob of “Victorious.” It’s as simple as that.

Since I thought up this “hot” take, I’ve asked a number of peers and friends what their outlook is, and everyone has agreed with me. Upon further discussion with fellow fans of the hit Nickelodeon show of the 2010s, “Victorious,” I’ve realized not only that I’m ridiculously correct, but also that the audience’s undying heart eyes for Beck are so, so wrong.

“Victorious” is a four-season sitcom starring Victoria Justice as Tori Vega, the female lead who has an incredible singing voice and delivers cringey lines. Ariana Grande plays Cat Valentine, a ditzzy redhead; Avan Jogia plays Beck Oliver, an aspiring actor with a scary girlfriend; Elizabeth Gillies plays Jade West, Beck’s scary girlfriend; and Matt Bennett plays Robbie Shapiro, a nerd with a puppet.

The characters attend Hollywood Arts, a high school full of talented, creative students, where they sing (amazing songs) whenever they can and make rather hilarious jokes. However, the most important character is played by Leon Thomas III, who plays André Harris: the subject of this piece and who should have been the eye candy on the show.

André has it all. He sings, he plays, like, 4,000 instruments, he writes songs, and he’s hecking adorable. The quirky, protective, and compassionate personality André displays pulls my heartstrings almost as much as my detestation for Beck’s boring characteristics. I’m not saying Beck isn’t attractive—he definitely has his “oh hot damn” moments—but André is unrivaled.

So, why isn’t André the center of every girl’s attention? Nickelodeon’s audience may not be purposefully racist—considering it’s made up of viewers ranging from two to 15 years old—but since we are inherently prejudiced as a society, shows like “Victorious” tend to other people of color, which influences the perspectives of the audience. This concept is comparable to how children tend to follow in their parents’ footsteps. If you grow up eating smoked salmon on an everything bagel, then it’s a delicious habit you will maintain. Similarly, if a child



Illustration Hailey Akau

grows up watching shows that place the spotlight on the white guy with flowy hair, then the child will most likely be drawn to such people because that is what they were exposed to through television.

The creators of “Victorious” basically pushed an agenda to ignore André and fawn over Beck instead. When the camera lands on Beck, the wind is always perfectly blowing his hair and sometimes there’s even special sound effects that highlight Beck as a “hottie.” On the other hand, André’s scenes tend to show him as Tori’s little helper, especially when she plays a damsel-in-distress in need of a new song to whip her uncombed hair to. The writers never gave André the spotlight he deserved.

Despite being responsible for basically every single song in the series, André was never portrayed as more than a good musician who hates brussel sprouts. The few times Nickelodeon (kind of) delved deep into his character was to introduce his “crazy” grandma, giving audiences ammunition to make fun of André, not celebrate him.

Growing up as a person of color, I’ve noticed white people love to ridicule members of my family. Whether it’s for

how they speak, dress, act, whatever, my white peers always found a way to judge my parents, brothers, and even grandparents.

Linking such a negative character to André is another mockery of his “unimportant” role, even though his character is easily one of the most—if not the most—essential. André is one of the only characters of color on the series, and he’s literally the sound of the show.

It’s crystal clear that Nickelodeon itself—not only its viewers—is prejudiced. Numerous series from this network emphasize disrespectful stereotypes of different races and cultures. People of color are placed in characters that are stereotypical projections on the color of their skin, particularly in *Victorious*. André’s “crazy” grandma is not the only one.

Season 1 episode 19, “A Film by Dale Squires,” introduced André’s cousin Kendra Harris. For those who don’t remember, Kendra was hired by Tori and her posse to violently embarrass director Dale Squires for taking all the credit for a short film Tori made. This part of the episode exhibits a Black woman brought in to help a spoiled white girl and frames Kendra as a stereotypical angry Black

woman.

She is characterized by white characters as “sassy” and “intimidating,” and her scene aggressively screaming at the exploiting director is stretched upon belief. Once again, a “crazy” character is tied to André, belittling him and his family even more.

This is not to say that the other characters do not have stereotypical relatives—like Tori’s bratty, ditzzy sister and Robbie’s inept grandmother—which just further solidifies that *Victorious* and Nickelodeon shows in general use marginalized communities purely for comedic relief.

Can anyone think of a single episode where André had a romantic scene with any of the other female characters? No you cannot, because it never happened. Even Rex—a literal puppet—got his “hot scene” when he smooched Tori. Even the bonafide nerdy character Sinjin got a little peck on the cheek for doing Tori a favor. How is it possible that an inanimate object and a boy who collects teeth from relatives of past presidents got a smacker but not André?

The writers continuously teased viewers with a potential relationship between Tori and André. But that never evolved

either, because how could they possibly illustrate an interracial couple despite maintaining a ridiculous amount of sexual tension throughout the entire first season?

Throughout the series, every single thing André does reinforces his swagger. His undying passion for music, his catchy and charming lyrics, his dance moves when he vibes to Tori’s singing, and even his desperate attempt to get stung by a bee are all a hundred times more enticing than Beck’s handful of sexy moments.

On top of it all, Beck is whipped. Jade may occasionally be a badass, but at the end of the day her role is to be an unaffected mean girl whom Beck enables. Their relationship is surface level and monotonous.

If André was actually given the chance to be in any relationship that went beyond platonic, he would set a beautiful example for how a boyfriend should be. It’s obvious through his friendships with female characters that André is caring, loyal, and passionate. He would make any girl the happiest she could be, if given the chance to prove himself.

Nickelodeon and networks like it often overlook characters of color or use their cultures and backgrounds as comedic means to an end. Off the top of my head, the only other Nickelodeon shows with a character of color are “True Jackson VP” starring Keke Palmer and “Zoey 101” with Christopher Massey as high schooler Michael Barret.

As a society, the concept of diversity has stuck superficially, but applying inclusivity hasn’t at all. Simply casting people of color is not enough—it is necessary to show they belong. It is important for audience members to celebrate characters of color.

André Harris was not acknowledged enough despite all his character offered. This opinion may seem childish to some because “it’s just a show,” but these viewer tendencies are reflective of our society’s innate behavior. At the end of the day, it’s a matter of growing up and out of old-fashioned ideals. It’s about time André got his moment, don’t you think?

mariyam_quaisar@emerson.edu

Living Arts

Nigerian superstar Omah Lay electrifies Boston crowd at Big Night Live

Ethan Cotler
Beacon Correspondent

Omah Lay, an Afrobeats musician from Nigeria, made a pit stop Sept. 15 at Boston's Big Night Live during his "Boy Alone" album tour. Lay's debut album follows his 2020 EP "Get Layd."

Born and raised in the city of Port Harcourt, Nigeria, Lay vaulted into the international spotlight largely due to his pivotal single "Attention" with an electric feature from the Biebs himself—that's Justin Bieber, for those who may not know. At just 25 years old, amassing nearly four million monthly listeners on Spotify and collaborations with notable Afrobeats artists like SPINALL and Tay Iwar, Lay has established himself as a notable presence in the genre.

Days before the concert, Lay's media contact told me he was unavailable for an interview. I cordially accepted, but the fan in me told myself, I'm getting at least a statement from him. This became my mission long before I even arrived at the performance.

At 6:30 PM, four hours before Lay would enter stage left, the concert

just a few more minutes until his first-ever opening for Lay.

"It's a wonderful experience; a great opportunity," Rui said in an interview with the Beacon.

He described his music as Afrobeats with some R&B and very "up-tempo," which fittingly matched his bubbly personality.

The backstage double doors swung open, and everyone snapped their heads back as we did every time they opened that night. Alas, no Lay in sight.

Instead, it was UgoBoy, an Afrobeats musician who moved through the space confidently, with his shirt open and diamond chains sparkling, as if he was the headliner. He shamelessly stopped to strike a pose every time he found his reflection on the glass of a camera lens.

UgoBoy described his set as "electric music," which has a "pulse...that will keep you moving whether you know the song or not." He danced onto the stage and fulfilled his promise: the crowd, now three-quarters packed, had not a single motionless foot among it.

The DJ began feeding the hungry audience hints of Lay's nearing pres-



Omah Lay performing his set / Ethan Cotler

stage as the screams behind the curtains were increasing in anticipation.

Suddenly, a door I hadn't seen before swung open, and the actual green room was visible, lined with Fiji bottles and large-paned windows. Lay, in blue shag carpet pants and an equally enigmatic sweater vest, calmly walked to his entrance, a crew of people surrounding him. He stood beside me, less than an inch away from my face in that tight corridor.

I started to ask him, "How does—

ing; he was skipping across the stage, each white boot slapping the wood with intent: thud, thud, to the beat.

He commanded the audience to move as well, even once to hug their neighbor, to pervade love throughout the venue. A couple of Fiji bottles sat in front of him, pressed against the vibrating speakers.

He started with tracks like "tell everybody" and "bend you," a couple of hits off of "Boy Alone." As

as many as a typical concert. Most people were present, away from social media. His entire set kept a constant heartbeat anyone within a mile radius must've felt.

As entertaining as it all was, I couldn't help but desire just one statement from Lay. After all, it's what I'd set out to do. So, I went backstage a couple of minutes before he was to end. I stood in the hallway timidly; my camera dangled from my neck.

A round of applause erupted and Lay descended towards the green room with his posse, not even a single bead of sweat glistening on him. I waved my hand and said, "You killed it. How do you think you did tonight?"

He took his left ear plug out and cocked his head. Lay produced an audible, "Huh?"

I pivoted to a question I thought was more interesting: "How does the crowd here compare to Nigeria?"

Before he could let out anything else, his bodyguard grunted, "Don't worry about it."

The door shut with Lay and the Fiji bottles inside. I saw neither again.

I spent the whole concert imagining how I would construct this piece around a statement from Lay, so when I left empty handed, I felt defeated and a bit dumbfounded about how I'd attempt this review. I mean, I guess I could use Lay's "huh" since Oxford's Dictionary deems it a word, but what would I do with that?

These thoughts lasted only a second before I remembered all the outstanding moments: every smile, every handshake, and every time the door swung open were imprinted vividly, carbon-copied. Big Night Live lived up to its name due to the assemblage of vibes, jives, and good times brought by WayUp Rui, UgoBoy, Gingaman, Omah Lay, and too many others to count.

ethan_cotler@emerson.edu



Lay "commanded the audience" / Ethan Cotler

venue displayed harsh white LED lights and an empty floor.

However, judging by the wrapped-around-the-block line that gradually formed, his album had taken the hearts of many and given back very few.

I ducked under the barrier fence, gave my name, and entered backstage. It was just me, some photographers, and bustling employees. One was kind enough to get me a cup of water as I fiddled with the settings on my camera, ensuring I didn't mess up a single shot of the organized chaos that was to come.

Opener WayUp Rui popped his head out of one of the small, orange-painted "green" rooms with a cloud of smoke trailing behind. I tapped my foot impatiently; there were another three hours until Lay would arrive. Rui donned a sleek Dior print cardigan and a charming smile. He stood on the metal walkway that led up to the stage, waiting patiently to perform.

The lights went down, and the now half-filled crowd was met with vibrant red lights that stretched across the dance floor, lapping the walls of the VIP section in the back. Rui had

ence. The final opener, Gingaman, walked through the double doors. He was zeroed in, eyes locked forward to the curtain. I shook his hand and attempted to get a statement, but one of his entourage shrugged me off. I didn't mind because there was now only an hour until Lay's arrival—my eyes stayed intermittently fixated on those black double doors.

Suddenly, an outstretched hand appeared in my line of sight, breaking my concentration; it was Gingaman. He apologized, saying he couldn't hear me earlier. We stood close, nearly shouting above the blaring music, talking about the person that helped kickstart his passion for music.

"My mom," Gingaman said with a soft smile. "She sings as well. And I also grew up in the church, so my expression is from different facets of life."

He soon exited the venue with his crew, leaving the backstage eerily empty. Finally, a booming voice cut through the muffled music announcing Lay's arrival. The double doors did not open, so I rushed to the other side backstage. People were congregating in a narrow hallway. The artist was about to make his stroll to the

" when he began to melodically hum into the microphone, cutting me off. Lay stepped slowly towards the stage, low to the ground, before bursting through, immediately enchanting the audience, not with the magic of his singing or his fashion or the neon purple lights, but by the way he moved.

In UgoBoy's terms, Lay's energy was "electric." He wasn't just danc-

his set continued, he started to play songs separate from the album, like "PAMI," which features Wizkid, the most successful Afrobeats musician to date, and "Infinity" with Olamide.

The crowd's energy remained high all night long, regardless of each song's popularity. Honestly, I couldn't tell if it was Lay's presence or the song that impacted his audience so much. Sure, phones recorded his every movement but certainly not



The crowd at Omah Lay's concert at Big Night Live / Ethan Cotler

Alum’s Off-Broadway show finds success

cont from page 1

Off -Broadway.”

In the week prior to opening, “Jasper” had five preview performances. During previews, the show can undergo any amount of change between the script, light design, set design, or blocking. The playwright, director, and actors have a close relationship during previews to work out the kinks of the production. With opening night approaching, it was necessary for MacDermott to step away from the script.

“Every subsequent day, you lose a little more power,” MacDermott said. “[As a playwright] it’s a process of letting go—, as opposed to when you’re an actor, it’s a process of acquiring.”

As the actors explore the characters and familiarize themselves with the script, MacDermott relies on them to tell him what works and what doesn’t. He ended up cutting five pages before opening night.

“The other languages of the stage

start doing work for you,” MacDermott said. “I didn’t think it would change at all, and then I was wrong. That happens a lot when you’re an artist—you’re often wrong.”

Throughout the five previews and six shows in front of an audience, viewers laughed and cried at the dramatic story of “Jasper.”

The play follows the life of Drew and his wife Andrea as they navigate their marriage amidst the plummeting health of their son, Jasper. After Drew crosses paths with Shayla and her healthy son Tyler, he indulges in the father/son relationship he could not achieve on his own.

“We’ve had mixed reviews, but I think opening night went really well,” McHugh said. “[It] was surreal, and incredible, and exciting. But also nerve-wracking. As the director and producer of the show, I was very nervous.”

In addition to MacDermott’s writing, which proposed thoughtful questions, other elements of the show inspired mixed opinions.

Despite all of the difficulties and changes along the way, one thing remains: “Jasper” is a fantasy fulfilled.

“You dream about this sort of stuff for so long, and then when it actually happens, it just feels crazy,” MacDermott said. “My name is now down in a Playbill. I always thought of those as these kinds of historical documents that were very real, and now I see my name in it.”

From Emerson classrooms to an Off -Broadway stage, MacDermott’s experiences taught him a lesson that transcended the theater.

“Everyone’s process, although it seems different, is actually really similar,” MacDermott said. “We’re all working towards the same goal. You never know where your art might take you because you’re always going to be an artist—the question is in what capacity.”

emma_bowen@emerson.edu

All-Troupe show brings out the best in Emerson’s comedians

Jackson Bailey
Beacon Correspondent

A large crowd gathered outside the Student Performance Center last Friday night with anticipation building for “Too Loud,” the All-Troupe showcase meant to reintroduce 13 comedy orgs to audience members and prospective comedians.

The performance was advertised as a showcase of the Emerson Comedy Alliance—13 comedy troupes made up of sketch writers, improvisers, and stand-up comedians. They gathered in the SPC giving audiences a sense of the immense scope of this show.

Thirty minutes before the opening, there was a growing sense of excitement and anxiety amongst performers.

“There were buckets of nerves on everyone’s end,” said Sean Myers, president of This is Pathetic. “This is Pathetic is the smallest comedy troupe on campus, so finding our way to kind of perform in the style we like to perform was difficult and a challenge. It was a challenge we rose to.”

When the show began, the lights went up on a packed house. After a brief introduction video, Derbyn’s Emily Hammond and Chocolate Cake City’s Breanna Nesbith, both seniors, kicked off the show. Each troupe was given about five minutes to showcase their performers and style of comedy.

The show itself began with two video sketches from Goose Troupe. The first video mocked car salesman commercials while the second played out an awkward hook-up scenario. Both sketches leaned into the bizarre, which served as an effective comedic ice-breaker before the live performers took over.

The energy picked up from there. The next hour and a half was a whirlwind of performances touching on everything from romance novels to the Abby Lee Dance Company.

Highlights included the performance of Jimmy’s Traveling All-Stars, which included a sketch about a fourth “Night at the Museum” movie. Jimmy’s sketch included a guilt-ridden sea captain, who audiences later

learned was the departed captain of the Titanic. He, along with a child riddled with scarlet fever and an annoying Marilyn Monroe, served as strong character choices for Jimmy’s performance.

The loudest audience reaction came during the showcase of Stroopwafel, an improv comedy troupe. The troupe came out with immense energy, engaging the crowd and winning the audience over with a quick improv game that turned into a masterclass in controlled chaos.

“We had a rehearsal but I was nervous, it’s a lot of comedians,” said Connor Spring ‘25 of Stroopwafel.

In the stand-up comedy realm, junior Henry Cheney of Inside Joke grabbed their fair share of laughs with their dry narration of their own unique drawings. Other stand-up comedians included junior Matthew Schwartz, who talked about his recently acquired tattoos, and sophomore Jack Reisman, who used his time to discuss his sitcoms and his relationship with the TV show “The Goldbergs.”

Both Schwartz and Reisman performed well, but seemed to be rushing their jokes as they each were given only about two minutes to perform. Cheney’s set used the majority of Inside Joke’s time and as such had room to develop. Schwartz and Reisman performed as representatives from the stand-up comedy troupe Stand-up in the Park.

Though the show itself was lengthy at about two and a half hours, it remained engaging throughout. Troupes such as This is Pathetic and Stand-up in the Park relied on their skills as storytellers, while others like Emerson Comedy Workshop found comedy in spectacle, capping off the night with a wonderful skit that relied heavily on audio and props.

“The concern was the length,” Spring said. “But I think everybody was good enough where that wasn’t a problem. If people were bad tonight it would have been a different story, but the energy kept up so I think it worked.”

As the show moved along, audi-

ences gained a sense of each troupe’s styles and personalities. Troupes such as Derbyn and Goose troupe prioritized social awkwardness in their comedy, while improv troupes such as SWOMO and Stroopwafel utilized their high energy and wit. Performances from troupes such as The Girlie Project and This is Pathetic emphasized creativity and out-of the box thinking.

By the time the show ended, it was hard to pick a favorite amongst the drastically different styles—but that was the point. A large part of the All-Troupe showcase is getting a feel for the troupes, their styles, and their comedians.

“This was a great representation of Stroopwafel,” Spring said. “We just went up and had fun and were silly and stupid. We listened well. It was fun, and that’s Stroop.”

When the final performance was done, comedians hung around the SPC to congratulate each other on a successful night.

“It was wonderful,” Myers said. “Everyone was able to show themselves off... It was great for people to see what we’re all about.”

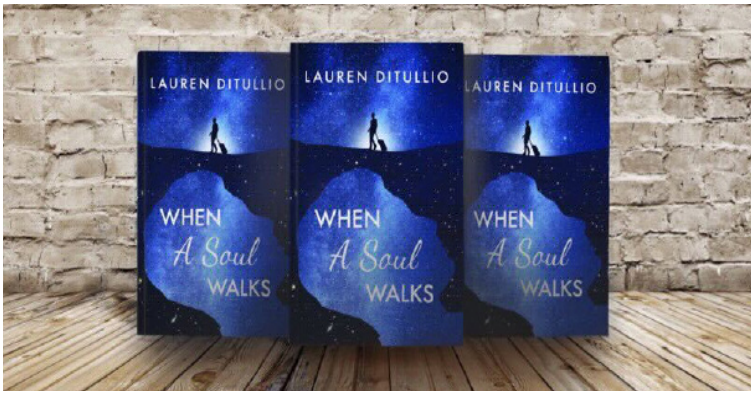
This collaborative show comes as part of a mission amongst Comedy Alliance troupes to foster a collaborative community of comedians.

“The comedy orgs are really excited about collaborating more this year, becoming more of a community,” Myers said. “I’m hoping there’s another All-Troupe when [the troupes have] their new members ready. That way we can introduce the new members.”

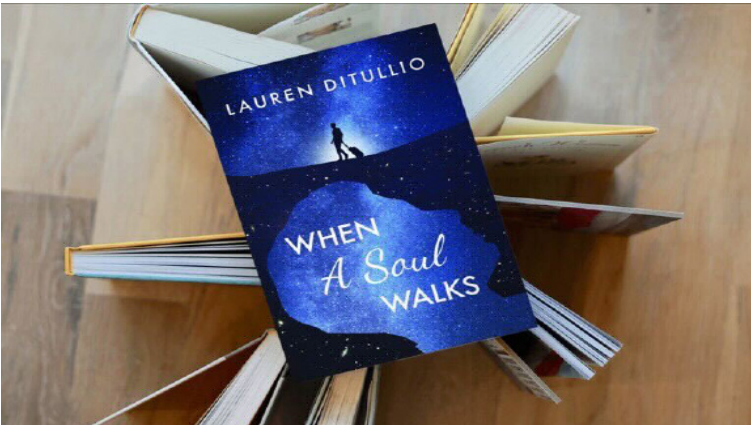
Some troupes began planning similar events inspired by the All-Troupe show and the collaborative spirit it promotes.

“I was saying prior to this show that we should do this more often,” Springs said. “I want to do a show called ‘Stroop Has Friends’ where we just invite other troupes to perform with us. Whoever’s interested should get to perform.”

jackson_bailey@emerson.edu



When a Soul Walks / Courtesy Lauren Ditullio



‘When A Soul Walks’: alum turns senior thesis into debut novel

Avicana Rivera
Beacon Correspondent

Amidst the emerging pandemic, an Emerson alum found solace, inspiration, and peace in writing a senior thesis that has now become her debut fiction novel.

Lauren Ditullio ‘22, a creative writing graduate, wrote “When A Soul Walks,” a novel that dives into the infinite question of what really happens when we die.

The story follows Edward Long, a successful neurosurgeon who dies of a brain tumor. After his death, Edward is placed into purgatory and given opportunities to try and right the wrongs of his lifetime, dying all over again with each failed attempt. Through his journey, Edward comes face to face with his past. As he travels through worlds with distorted memories, he endures “tests,” by reliving and re-encountering people and moments from his life in efforts to see if he would make the same mistakes.

“When A Soul Walks” was born in Ditullio’s junior year dorm room as the world shut down around her, a result of the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ditullio was preparing to study abroad at the Kasteel Well campus when the pandemic hit. When her travel plans were canceled, she continued fiction courses, like The Short Short Story, taught by Alyssa Greene via Zoom, whilst confined to her Boston dorm.

“It was definitely one of my favorite classes I’ve ever taken at Emerson because I discovered my love for storytelling,” Ditullio said.

“When a Soul Walks” started out as a short story for a class assignment—a simple story on any topic that was short and to the point.

“The goal was to create a strong sense of emotion with a small amount of words,” said Ditullio.

Ditullio proudly shared her short story with loved ones, leaving them wanting more and more. From there, the 500-word-story grew.

“I showed it to my mom, and she just said to me, ‘this isn’t done,’” Dit-

ullio said.

She kept writing, spending time in-between class assignments to go to “boot camp,” a weekly Zoom call for writers to sit down together and write in silence. This practice, which Ditullio refers to as “accountability writing,” helped evolve her short story into a manuscript.

Eventually, the manuscript evolved into her senior thesis through workshopping classes and constructive criticism from her thesis professor, William Orem.

“It was so helpful to be able to have someone look at your work and say, ‘this doesn’t make any sense,’” Ditullio said. “The constructive criticism goes a long way.”

After graduating, Ditullio went on to publish her first novel two years after the beginning drafts. It was then that she was partnered with fellow alum Jessica Drake-Thomas ‘14, another creative writing graduate, as her editor. Thomas, a freelance editor and horror-novel superfan, was instantly taken aback by Ditullio’s manuscript.

“I’ve truly never read anything like it,” Thomas said. “[‘When A Soul Walks’] has elements of several genres. I would say it’s horror-adjacent, with dark sci-fi fantasy and horror mixed in.”

“Just the way she talked about it made me want to take on the project,” Thomas said. “Hearing about her inspirations behind it and the originality of it was so interesting to me.”

As a new author, Ditullio admits this release was an emotional journey. By making the decision to list the book for only \$0.99, she introduces herself into the sci-fi community, while giving readers an opportunity to be introduced to her storytelling. “When A Soul Walks” is currently available on Amazon, Kindle and paperback.

“My goal in publishing this book wasn’t for profit,” Ditullio said. “I wanted this book to provide [readers] a sense of hope, and I wanted for me to be able to get comfortable with my work being out there... I would give out copies for free if I could.”

avicana_rivera@emerson.edu

Sports

Women’s volleyball sweeps Rivier, extends winning streak to three

Jordan Pagkalinawan
Beacon Correspondent

The Emerson women’s volleyball team claimed victory against the Rivier Raiders on Wednesday night, improving to 7-1 overall following their third sweep in a row. One week removed from their first loss of the season to MIT, the Lions returned to their winning ways, not dropping a set along the way. Rivier opened the first set strong, taking a 4-1 lead before the Lions got back in the game with kills from sophomore outside hitters Isabella Chu and Parker Cummings. The Lions eventually took an 8-6 lead after consecutive errors by Rivier, who responded with two kills that tied the game at eight. The back-and-forth continued throughout the set, with strong rallies from both sides, only ever separated by three at 15-12. As much as there were kills, there were plenty of errors on both sides, but the Lions capitalized on their opportunities and took the first set 25-21. Head coach Ben Read praised Rivier

for their serving and passing, the latter of which the Lions were able to exploit. “We recognized some other people weren’t passing as well, and we targeted them,” he said. “Once we got them out of [their] system, we could set up our defense and [do] what we needed to do.” The Lions began the second set in control, taking a 5-0 lead that forced a Rivier timeout. Though Rivier got on the board with a kill, the Lions could not be stopped, and in the blink of an eye, it was 12-3, Emerson. Emerson continued to dominate the second set, with notable kills coming from first-year outside hitter Taylor Esmie and sophomore outside hitter Amelia Combs. The Lions capped off set two 25-8 with a block from senior setter Rebecca Polsky. The third set began with several errors on both sides, but the Lions clinched a 4-1 lead. They jumped out to a 7-3 lead with kills from Cummings and senior middle Logan Steenbergen, both assisted by senior setter Caroline Bond, who finished the game with 17 assists. The momentum continued with a block by Bond and junior middle

Isabella Cubba. Though the Lions led 8-3, Rivier stormed back, tying the set on an ace, and in the next play, another ace gave them a 9-8 lead, forcing Read to call a timeout. The Lions came out of the time out and eventually took the lead at 11-10—one they would not give up for the rest of the match. Pulling away at 16-14, the Lions closed the set on a 9-0 run, capping off their sweep with a score of 25-14. The team faced multiple close points in the game but was able to take control due to their match mentality. “I am proud of us for never letting up,” Combs said after the game. “Even when we had a large lead, but most importantly, it was fun being on the court.” After a series of away games, the Bobbi Brown and Steven Plofker Gym became a massive boon to the Lions. “We just had to get used to being back on the court at home,” said Cummings, who led the offense with eight kills. “Once we got used to it, and we remembered what we were doing, we killed it.” The Lions “killed it” indeed, tallying 30 kills as a team. While Cum-



Emerson Lions huddle up before game / Jordan Pagkalinawan

ings had eight, Combs contributed six, and Chu had four. Combs also had a season-high six aces. Read emphasized that the win was a team effort. “[Davis], defensively, dug a lot of balls,” he said. “[Montenegro] changed the flow, got the balls to who we needed to. [Combs] from the service line, serve-serve, and hitting outside, she did an exceptional job. We played three middles that did a good job blocking as well.” In regards to maintaining momentum, Cummings said there is not much that needs to be done. “We just need to keep pushing,

keep working together like we are already,” she said. “As long as we keep doing what we’re doing, we got it.” The Lions continue NEWMAC play with games against Springfield, Wellesley, and Babson in the coming days. “Now, it’s a matter of us executing, having a good game plan, and trusting ourselves,” Read said. “We play with confidence; we have fun out there on the court.”

jordan_pagkalinawan@emerson.edu

Can the Bruins rebound? It’s complicated.

cont. from page 1

McAvoy’s defensive shifts. Jakub Zboril, Connor Clifton, Brandon Carlo, and Mike Reilly will take over Grzelczyk’s duties. Whether this depth will be enough for the Bruins to win while their key players recover remains to be seen.

2. Will the returning David Krejci be as impactful as the last time he wore a Bruins jersey?

Krejci stepped away from the Bruins at the end of the 2021 season to play in Czechia, citing a desire to be closer to his family. However, he resigned with the Bruins this offseason, likely itching for another chance at the Stanley Cup alongside teammates he’d played with for over a decade. In the Czech Extraliga—the country’s top professional league and one of the best in Europe—Krejci scored 20 goals and tallied 26 assists for 46 points in 51 games for HC Oloouc. Krejci led his team in goals and points while ranking in the top 20 league-wide in both categories. But as good as Krejci was in Czechia, it isn’t the same as the NHL. Stepping back into the best league in the world at age 36 is a lofty goal. Krejci will be asked to handle second-line center responsibilities and facilitate playmaking, likely between Taylor Hall and David Pastrnak. Luckily for Krejci, Hall and Pastrnak should have the high-end speed to receive Krejci’s passes and transport them up ice. Ultimately, it’s up to him to prove he can still be effective at the highest level.

3. Can any of the Bruins’ young players take big steps forward this year?

The Bruins’ prospect pool was recently ranked dead last in the NHL by The Athletic. It’s not particularly uncommon for teams that regularly contend for a championship to lack high-end prospects, but those teams also need some of their drafted talent to join the big club and contribute, particularly in a flat salary cap league. Last season, there were sev-

en players under 24 years old who played games for the team. Only two—Swayman and McAvoy—were regular contributors last season, though each still has room to grow. Of the others—those still on the roster—Oskar Steen had occasional stretches of strong play but couldn’t grab hold of a spot in the bottom six while everybody else was healthy. Jack Studnicka has been a frustrating player for years, often touted as the Bruins’ best prospect but unable to produce at the highest levels. Marc McLaughlin—signed out of Boston College—was an effective fourth-line grinder but will have to prove he’s better than the competition he’ll face for ice time. Trent Frederic, , seems to have lost his place in the lineup, after breaking into the league on a line with Charlie Coyle and Craig Smith in the 2021 season. Fabian Lysell, the Bruins’ 2021 first-round pick, played major junior hockey last season, but at 19, it seems like a long way from the NHL. The bottom line is the Bruins are an aging team, particularly at the top of their lineup. While Bergeron defied the effects of aging for some time now and Marchand seemed to hit his prime after he turned 30, they won’t be dominant forever. When they do hang up the skates, the team will need effective young players to at least attempt to fill their roles.

4. Will Pavel Zacha be more productive than he was in New Jersey?

The one-for-one swap of Erik Haula for Zacha was interesting. Statistically, Haula and Zacha share similar profiles from the 2021-22 season. Haula posted 18 goals and 44 points, while Zacha put up 15 goals and 36 points. From a financial perspective, Zacha actually costs the Bruins more, with a \$3.5 million cap hit compared to Haula’s \$2.4 million. But there isn’t a huge gap between the players in terms of money or performance, so why swap at all? One reason is that 25-year-old Zacha is significantly younger than Haula, who turned 31 last March. The Bruins are betting that Zacha, a former top-10 draft pick, has room to grow, especially playing for a team likely to perform better than last sea-

son’s 28th-place New Jersey Devils. Haula was a great fit on a scoring line between Hall and Pastrnak last year, particularly when they were on the rush. But in the playoffs, when the rush offense is usually limited by tighter-checking hockey, the Hall-Haula-Pastrnak trio dried up offensively, forcing Cassidy to split them up. The hope is that Zacha will be a better fit throughout the lineup, one that can contribute regardless of which line he lands on. He’ll likely get some opportunity with Bergeron to start, but when Marchand returns, he will be demoted to the second or third unit.

5. How will new head coach Jim Montgomery impact the squad?

Cassidy filled the role of Bruins head coach for nearly six seasons, leading the team to the playoffs every year he was in charge. But after last season’s first-round playoff loss to the Carolina Hurricanes, upper management decided Cassidy’s run was over, releasing him in favor of former Dallas Stars head coach Jim Montgomery. Montgomery is known for being good with young players—something his predecessor was reportedly not. His track record through the USHL and NCAA suggests he is able to squeeze the most out of young talent and institute good playing habits. But Cassidy was no second-rate coach, either. The Bruins may not have developed many young players into superstars under his tenure, but they were also consistently near the top of the league standings. Montgomery’s hiring marks a change in front-office philosophy as the Bruins shift their focus to the youth on their roster. But how much more effective can Montgomery really be? Is the coaching staff responsible for the lack of development in young players, or is the front office—which has consistently traded away high draft picks and top prospects—to blame? The Bruins are betting Montgomery can turn around some of their struggling youngsters, transforming them into consistent contributors.

leo_kagan@emerson.edu

Men’s soccer team tramples Lesley 8-1, wins eighth Charles River Cup

Leo Kagan
Beacon Staff

Lining up to shake hands with the Lesley University Lynx, Emerson men’s soccer players were all smiles Tuesday night as they prepared to hoist the Charles River Cup for the eighth time in team history. The Lions, who won 8-1, remain defending champions of the Charles River Cup—a trophy given annually to the winner of competition between Lesley and Emerson’s soccer teams. Tuesday’s match was the 17th time the two squads faced off for the cup. Senior forward Phil Han said the annual contest is one that is circled on the calendar. “Historically, this is one of the games that we look to get out for,” he said. “I think it was good for team morale to get the win.” The Lions, now 4-0-3 this season, put on a commanding performance against the Lynx from start to end, finishing on nearly every chance they had and allowing few opportunities for Lesley to do the same. Han scored the first goal of the night in the 18th minute rocketing the ball into the left side of the net with a powerful kick, putting the Lions up by one. Head coach Dan Toulson said he expected a big game from Han. “As he was warming up, he looked really good, so I’m not surprised that he did that,” Toulson said. “I thought that was really impressive.” Towards the end of the first half, the Lions doubled their lead with a goal from sophomore forward Teddy Bushara, who blew past the defender on the left wing and let the ball fly into the bottom right corner of the net. Heading into halftime, the team was glad to be up by two, but not totally satisfied with the level of play. “We always try to rally at half,” Bushara said. “Coach’s always great at his inspirational speeches. I think as a program we want to get better every half. I think we just built what we started in the first

half and it kind of snowballed.” In the first few minutes of the second half, the Lions looked to be on shaky ground as they took a pair of fouls and allowed a couple shots. They soon steadied themselves with two goals from Han and sophomore midfielder Diego Jimenez, separated by barely a minute. Those goals marked the beginning of a second-half offensive explosion which saw Emerson tally six consecutive markers. Han and Jimenez’s goals were followed by tallies from sophomore midfielder Hugo Berville, Bushara, senior forward Nathan Yarborough, and first-year forward Chris Moulinos. The team credited its second-half offensive success to effective ball movement. “I thought we worked together well as a team,” said Han. “One of our goals was to play the ball quick and make a lot of passes. I thought we did that.” “The ball movement was really good,” added Toulson. “The way we created attacks is what we wanted to do—getting the ball wide, cutting it back, little things that we talk about in practice.” The Lynx scored their first goal of the night late in the second half—thanks to first-year midfielder Ayman Amghar—but the game was already out of reach. Minutes later, the Lions lifted the Charles River Cup in celebration, but Toulson noted it wasn’t the cup that mattered most. “[For us] it’s not really about outcome goals, it’s a lot about process goals,” said Toulson. “I was much more focused on how we approached the game, how we warmed up, all those little things.” Tuesday night, that process went well for the Lions. They will continue to test it in their next game against the 4-2-1 Babson Beavers on Saturday.

leo_kagan@emerson.edu